When the hunting party returned to camp Spock and Selon each carried a le-matya pelt strapped to his saddle, but the skin Spock displayed to his admiring companions was the rare silver-white much prized by Vulcans.

"It was a fine shot. See, the skin is scarcely damaged. Spock does credit to my training," the leader boasted. "The brute was dead before I even saw it."

"A magnificent trophy indeed." Savak had edged forward through the crowd and was stroking the soft fur. "My father has long coveted such a skin. It would be a fine gift for him. Will you wager for it, Spock?"

There was a subtle challenge in his voice, and Spock's eyes narrowed. If he refused the wager, Savak would undoubtedly claim that he feared to test his skill.

"Under what conditions, Savak?"

"The archery trial tomorrow."

So. Savak had chosed well. With the bow, both were evenly matched. For a moment Spock hesitated, then he nodded.

"As you wish. What will you stake against the pelt?"

"My Human slave."

The value of the stakes was judged equal and the wager recorded. Spock joined Satak, who smiled briefly.

"It seems you will have the slave after all, Spock."

"Perhaps not, Savak is my equal at archery. I could not refuse the wager, but it would be a pity to lose the pelt. My own father would have liked the fur. Now I must lose it or gain a slave I do not want."

"You could always sell him," Satak said, "unless you change your mind--or I will relieve you of the burden of choice, and the fair beauty, too."

"First I have to win." And he intended to. Only Satak knew that it was because he wished to keep the pelt, rather than acquire the slave.

It was as the young warrior had predicted--a close match. Spock and Savak scored equally well at the stationary target, and all depended on the final round. Two swift, delicate kwiat were released at the same moment, and, as the horned creatures fled for safety, dodging and weaving erratically, each man picked his moment to shoot. Both animals fell to the first arrow, and only after consideration by the Warleader and his captains was Spock's judged the cleaner kill.

"You shot well," Savak admitted, his anger only thinly veiled. "I would have liked the skin and I will miss the slave. You will find he has...interesting...qualities. He will be delivered to your tent this evening."

Spock was half tempted to tell Savak to keep the slave, but there was no pleasing the man. A poor loser might take generosity for arrogance. He had won fairly. It would be less trouble to take the prize.

Turning to Satak, he said, "I think I will swim now, will you join me?"

Spock lingered for some time by the pool, and when he returned at last to his tent, it was almost time for the evening meal. He intended to change, and join his friends at the communal table, but as the tent flap fell behind him, he saw that a low table had been set for a meal, and a rich, savory smell came from the small stove.

Startled, he glanced at the youth kneeling by the table, noting the bowl of water scented with herbs that stood ready for his refreshment, and the light robe that lay on the bed.

The slave rose and carried the bowl forward as Spock sat down, and without being told, he unlaced and removed the Vulcan's sandals, washing and drying his master's feet. He held the robe while Spock stripped off his tunic, and assisted him into the garment. Then as Spock reclined at the table he served the meal, all in complete silence.

He shows proper respect, Spock thought approvingly. He remembered the struggling barbarian of a few days ago. Savak had trained him well.

Idly he asked, "What is your name, slave?"

Head respectfully lowered, the youth answered promptly, "Lord Savak did not choose to give me one, master. It is as my lord wishes."

"I meant your own name--the one you had before you were captured."

"Kirk, my lord, James Kirk."

"Exotic. I like it. That is what you will be called." He felt a curious wish to see the alien's eyes. "Look at me."

The youth obeyed, and Spock studied him with interest. Yes, the wine-gold eyes were as beautiful as ever, but they seemed curiously blank, providing, now, no clue to the Human's thoughts.

I hope Savak hasn't broken his spirit completely, Spock thought. It might be interesting to know what that golden gaze hid. "How did you know what to do? I gave no instructions, but the meal is prepared to my taste."

"During the voyage to Vulcan I was given some training in the duties of a peronal servant, my lord. I wasn't sure what you would want, so I asked one of the general slaves who had attended you, and followed his advice."

Intelligent and conscientious, most slaves would have lounged around waiting for orders. He saw that the youth had also occupied himself by tidying the tent. With proper training he might be valuable indeed.

"You have done well." Spock rose and indicated the remaining food. "You may now eat. When you have finished, I will retire."